

The Veterans Voice



Newsletter of the New Hampshire Veterans Home, Summer 2013

Commandant's Report

Margaret "Peggy" LaBrecque



Getting settled in

Greetings!

I'm honored to have been appointed as the tenth Commandant here at the New Hampshire Veterans Home. I look forward to continuing to provide quality care and quality of life to New Hampshire's heroes.

As with all changes of leadership, there will be many adjustments, both large and small, made as I settle into to my new role. I look forward to sitting with our veterans and employees to understand the changes they would like to see here at the Home.

The first change we've made to keep all residents and employees safe and healthy is to limit smoking to only those veterans admitted to the Home before the "smoke free campus" policy was approved by the Board of Managers in July of 2012.

The Home actively encouraged residents and employees to quit smoking before the smoke-free campus rules took effect July 1, and we will continue to offer smoking cessation assistance.

And the Home appreciates the cooperation of everyone – visitors, volunteers, vendors and others -- in abiding by the "smoke-free campus" policy.

Such small sacrifices help make life better for those who gave so much for their country. The one motto I always loved when I first came to work here at the Home in December of 2005 is "The residents don't live where we work. We work where they live".

In closing, thank you all for your ongoing support of the New Hampshire Veterans Home.

Peggy LaBrecque



Veterans' organization representatives attending the unveiling and dedication ceremony on June 18 included, from left, Robert Blais; William Roy, Kenneth Maynard, Earl Beale, Marc Grimshaw, John Neylon, Kent Nolan and Alan Baumann.

"Still serving those who served"

American Legion's Lasting Gift

TILTON – The familiar wooden sign that greeted visitors at the main entrance of the New Hampshire Veterans Home for years has finally faded into the past, replaced by an impressive black granite monument given by the American Legion Department of New Hampshire.

"We don't have a hot-dog stand anymore; We have a great welcome sign," recently retired Home Commandant Barry Conway

told a group of about 30 representatives of veterans' service organizations who braved a gray, drizzly morning on Tuesday, June 18, for the official dedication.

Commandant Margaret D. LaBrecque welcomed representatives of the American Legion and VFW, the Home's Board of Managers, and numerous other veterans' organizations to the unveiling of the multi-

(Continued on page 2)



ON THE MOVE — Resident Al Cunningham, left, goes for a spin with staffers of Northeast Passage, the UNH program that brought a truckload of special bikes here on June 6 for residents to enjoy. (Another picture, Page 3)

It's official: Veterans Home went smoke-free on July 1

TILTON – The New Hampshire Veterans Home became a smoke-free facility on July 1, another landmark step for the health and safety of residents and staff of the Home, which has served the state's veterans since 1890.

In simplest terms, the new policy means no smoking by anyone – residents, visitors or staff – anywhere on our historic 27-acre hilltop campus.

Home Commandant Margaret D. LaBrecque said the policy, long under development, was spurred by reports of smoking-caused fires and injuries in other health-care facilities around the country. The policy was first announced nearly a year ago to give residents and staff time to prepare or to quit.

The move mirrors trends across the industry. Officials of the New Hampshire Health Care Association estimate more than 50 percent of the state's health-care facilities are already smoke-free.

And other veterans' homes around the country have similar policies. Oregon, which has some of the nation's most stringent anti-smoking laws, only carves out an exception for a handful of smokers at its veterans' home. Maine's six veterans' facilities are all tobacco-free.

NHVA admissions since Oct. 1, 2012 have been non-smoking, and fewer than 10 of the Home's roughly 190 current residents have been "grandfathered" as active smokers under the new Resident Smoking policy.

The change will mean they must take their smoking outdoors. The current smoking room, which vents directly to the outside, will be turned into a storage area. Shelters have been erected in two courtyard areas where the residents will be allowed to smoke.

The Home will offer residents smoking-cessation assistance, and use of electronic cigarettes will be allowed in a limited area.

The Smoke-Free Workplace policy will apply to everyone else – staff, volunteers, visitors, contractors, consultants, student interns, vendors and their employees while working on premises. It covers all indoor and outdoor areas, personal vehicles and NHVA fleet vehicles.



Commandant Margaret LaBrecque, hidden, and Executive Assistant Alice Brown uncover the monument at the start of the ceremony.

NH American Legion's lasting gift

(Continued from page 1)

ton slab of polished black granite near the end of the main entrance road from Winter Street.

She thanked all of the veterans' groups for their generosity in supporting the mission of the Home, which has served the state's veterans since its founding nearly 125 years ago.

The \$15,000 monument, which will greet those entering the Home for many decades to come, is hand-engraved on the front with a drawing of the original 1890 New Hampshire Soldiers Home and on the back with a full-color American Flag and the American Legion symbol.

It was only through the generosity of the

extended American Legion family that the necessary funds were raised for the two-year project, said past American Legion Department Commander Robert "Bob" Blais, the project's principal sponsor, who described the project's two-year path to realization.

"This is your handiwork, legionnaires," he said.

Also speaking at the event were American Legion National Vice-Commander John E. Neylon and current American Legion Department of New Hampshire Commander Kenneth Maynard.

Thanks to the Legion, the New Hampshire Veterans Home finally has an entrance monument that fittingly honors the service of the Home's residents.

NHHCA honors state's outstanding LNAs

Cathy Ballou, LNA III on the LEDU 1 unit, holds the certificate of appreciation from the New Hampshire Health Care received during the organization's annual LNA Day on the State House Lawn in Concord June 6.

Cathy, who has been with the New Hampshire Veterans Home since 2009, was our nominee for LNA of the Year.

She was cited by her supervisors for consistently giving that little bit extra for her unit's residents, delivered with a warm smile.

Her work exemplifies the important role LNAs play and how they make a world of difference in residents' lives.



Cathy Ballou

Recent Donations



Ed Walter, third from right, owner of NHCars.net of Hooksett, donates an Inva Care hand-driven bicycle to NHVH during the Commandant's Update ceremony on June 26. He came with members of the NH Combat Veterans Motorcycle Association. Resident Ron Barcomb demonstrates the bike.



The Veterans Club at the New Hampshire Technical Institute in Concord donated a new floor buffing machine to NHVH May 14. At right are members Steven Kazakis of Boscawen and Shane Roosa of Concord, both Army veterans, listening as adviser Elizabeth Pantacoloni speaks.



The Warrior Thunder Foundation of Millis, Mass., donated two comfortable park benches to NHVH on June 26, part of the proceeds of a fundraiser in New Hampshire. From left are Judi Bean; NHVH Commandant Margaret LaBrecque; Foundation president Darren Bean, a retired Army sergeant major; Lee-Ann Barkouse and Donna Bulger.

Resident Activities



The Residents Council elected new officers for 2013-2014 at its meeting on Thursday, June 20. Those taking office are, from left, John Noonan, first vice president; Al Armstrong, chaplain; Roger Paris, president, and Pat Ramey, second vice president. Not shown is Fred Osgood, sergeant-at-arms.

Welcome Home

Two residents of the New Hampshire Veterans Home, Army Specialist 4 Dave Clark, left, and Army Supply Technician Pat Ramey, were among the crowd of more than 1,000 that filled the New Hampshire National Guard Airport March 30 for the state's first welcome home ceremony for Vietnam veterans.

The date was designated by the State Legislature to honor the warriors who served in an unpopular conflict and got cold greetings, no gratitude and third-class citizen treatment when they came home.

But at this event, they got a warm reception from New Hampshire's US senators, representatives and Gov. Maggie Hassan. Air Force Maj. Gen. Bill Reddell, New Hampshire's adjutant general, ended the



ceremony with a call to veterans to reach out to those who did not attend. "I need you ... to tell them that it's okay. I need you to tell them we are proud of their service. And most of all, I need you to tell them welcome home."

Donation



Parishoners of St. Katharine Drexel Catholic Church of Wolfeboro donated a big basket of popcorn and oil and several cases of diet beverages on May 22. From left, Larry and Betty Poliquin, Clarita Hoyt, Martha Horton and Larry and Eileen Gil.



Hope DiPalma gets the grand tour from Christine Garner during the adaptive bicycling event June 6.



New Hampshire Veterans Home

Margaret D. LaBrecque, Commandant
139 Winter Street
Tilton, NH 03276
Phone: 603-527-4400
Fax: 603-527-4402
Website: www.nh.gov/veterans

PRST STD
US POSTAGE PAID
PERMIT NO. 1478
CONCORD, NH 03301

Newsletter editor: Len Stuart, Program Information Officer
603-527-4898 / Leonard.stuart@nhvh.nh.gov

Return Service Requested

Upcoming Events at NHVH

New Hampshire Veterans Home Annual Classic Cruise Night! Thursday, August 8, 2013

(Rain date: Thursday, August 15)



Enjoy Classics from the Golden Age of Horsepower
6-8 p.m., 139 Winter Street, Tilton, NH

Free Admission, No Entry Fee; Registration 5-6 p.m. at the Pavilion

Live entertainment with the Bel Airs!

Light refreshments available

50/50 Raffle to benefit NHVH Resident Benefit Fund

For more information please call: Maureen Campbell, 527-4889;
Jon Bossey 527-4452; or Christine Garner 527-4815

For directions, visit the NHVH website at www.nh.gov/veterans



9/5/13 Celebrate Employees Day

9/8/13 Grandparents
Day with Ice
Cream Social

9/11/13 Patriot Day

9/14/13 NHVH Rides to
Remember

9/14-15 American Legion
POW/MIA Vigil

9/28/13 Family Fun Day



9/28/13 Central NH
Alzheimer's Memory
Walk (Manchester)